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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on an evaluation of the effectiveness of a graduate seminar on "Women and Leadership" attended by 18 participants during the 1992 winter interim at Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois. The course was based on theoretical assumptions from the literature about leadership and about women's development. The three major course objectives were: (1) to encourage development of each woman's "voice"; (2) to enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness; and (3) to raise each woman's professional aspirations. The paper includes a description of course design, materials, and activities. The evaluation comprises analysis of essay responses to final exam questions, responses on the university's required faculty form, and responses to a follow-up questionnaire completed 6 months after the course ended. Evaluation indicated that the course was highly effective in accomplishing the three objectives and that this success was related to the course's structure and design. Self-confidence of each participant was enhanced due to the exploration of the concept of "voice" and the idea that women may lead differently from men and still be effective. Class participants, encouraged by each other and through the examples of the guest speakers, illustrate that, through mutual effort and sharing, the group achieves more than any individual could alone. (GLR)

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CONNECTED KNOWING: EVALUATING A WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, Georgia. April, 1993.

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Abstract

The paper presents an evaluation of the accomplishment of three major objectives for 18 women participants in a Winter Interim graduate seminar on Women and Leadership at Bradley University, Peoria, IL, in January, 1992. The course was based on theoretical assumptions from the literature about leadership and about women's development. The three major course objectives were: (1) To encourage development of each woman's "voice"; (2) To enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness; and, (3) To raise each woman's professional aspirations. The paper includes description of course design, materials, and activities. The participants ranged in age from 22 to 45, with half being in their 20s. The evaluation analyzes essay responses to the Final Exam questions, responses on the university's required Faculty Evaluation form, and responses to a Follow-Up Questionnaire completed six months after the course ended.

Connected Knowing:
Evaluating a Women and Leadership Seminar

Introduction

A graduate seminar on Women and Leadership (ELH 681 - 3 credit hours) was offered during Winter Interim, January 2 - 18, 1992, by the Department of Educational Leadership and Human Development at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. The 14 session seminar met on three consecutive Saturdays, and selected intervening weekdays. The 18 women participants enrolled in response to the following course description: "Through readings, guest lectures, and discussions, participants will examine the research about women in leadership positions in K-12 education, higher education, business, and the public sector. Topics will include: issues of gender and leadership effectiveness, ways women's leadership may differ from men's, contemporary scholarship on women's development, mentoring, career paths, and networking." The women ranged in age from 22 to 45. The majority of the women were enrolled in either the Master of Arts in Educational Administration or Master of Arts in Institutional Advancement and Administration programs. Several already held administrative positions either in K-12 education, higher education, or the public sector.

Educational administration remains a field dominated numerically by men. Courses and workshops focused on helping women overcome various barriers to their full inclusion in the field of educational administration have been reported (Shakeshaft, 1989, p. 212). However, survey of the literature on educational experiences specifically designed for developing the leadership capabilities of future women administrators revealed only three recent reports of such programs at the graduate level (Connel & Kimmel, 1982; Diener & Owens, 1984; and Pigford & Tonnsen, 1990). Believing that other programs and courses exist, but that often the results are not documented, the author shares a comprehensive evaluation of one such course. This evaluation is based on data collected at the conclusion of the course and six months later. Three major course objectives and several types of evaluation data are considered. Presentation and analysis of the evaluation data will show that the course accomplished three major objectives: (1) To encourage development of each woman's "voice"; (2) To enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness;

and (3) To raise each woman's professional aspirations.

Theoretical Assumptions

The primary sources for the design of the class were Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986), The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership (Helgesen, 1990), and the author/course instructor's previous work with designing leadership development experiences for women. The authors of Women's Ways of Knowing demonstrated that "the development of a sense of voice, mind, and self were intricately intertwined" (Belenky, et al., p. 18). Influenced by their work, Helgesen (1990) conducted more limited interview research, patterned after Henry Mintzberg's 1968 diary studies of male managers. Helgesen's work asserts that a major characteristic of women as leaders is that "women's way of leading emphasizes the role of voice over that of vision" (Helgesen, 1990, p. 223).

The design of the course grew out of assumptions about the importance of voice for women leaders and belief in the power of a "connected class" to move each woman along in the journey to find her own unique voice:

> The connected class provides a culture for growth . . . The connected teacher tries to create groups in which members can nurture each other's thoughts to maturity . . . In a connected class no one apologizes for uncertainty . . . The connected class recognizes the core of truth in the subjectivist view that each of us has a unique perspective that is in some sense irrefutably 'right' by virtue of its existence. But the connected class transforms these private truths into 'objects,' publicly available to the members of the class who, through 'stretching and sharing,' add to themselves as knowers by absorbing in their own fashion their classmates ideas. (Belenky, et al., 1986, pp. 221 - 223)

The class was designed to facilitate connected knowing, with opportunities to both talk and listen. The group always met in a circle and the three Saturday sessions included sharing lunch. Class members took turns presenting information and leading the discussions as they examined the

research about women and leadership. The instructor and fourteen invited guests, who were outstanding female leaders from a variety of fields, shared their career path stories and ideas about leadership, demonstrating that women who are leaders are not all alike, do not speak in the same voice. In describing the collaborative exploration possible in connected-knowing groups, Belenky et al. stated: "Through mutual stretching and sharing the group achieves a vision richer than any individual could achieve alone (1986, p. 119). For the women in this class, this richer vision included the understanding that "developing voice" is integral to developing leadership, and that it is all right for women to lead differently than men. Helgesen's (1990) work focuses on defining that difference between male and female leaders. For example, she writes, "the female view that one strengthens oneself by strengthening others is finding greater acceptance, and female values of inclusion and connection are emerging as valuable leadership qualities" (Helgesen, 1990, p. 233). In arguing for the value of women's ways of leadership, Helgesen quotes extensively from Women's Ways of Knowing. She also refers to Carol Gilligan's concept of "a different voice," saying that the concept "both defines female development and encompasses women's value for connectedness" (Helgesen, 1990, p. 223).

In addition to the theoretical assumptions from the work of Helgesen, and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule, a primary assumption was that self-confidence influences aspirations. Shakeshaft's (1989) summary of research on internal barriers to women's advancement in administration reports some of the work that has been done on the relationship between self-confidence and aspirations. From these assumptions, and previous experiences of the author with developing women's leadership abilities, the three course objectives previously stated emerged: (1) To encourage development of each woman's "voice"; (2) To enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness; and (3) To raise each woman's professional aspirations.

Seminar Overview

The course goals stated in the syllabus were:

1. To examine the research about women in leadership positions in K-12 education, higher

education, business, and the public sector.

2. To hear from women leaders in K-12 education, higher education, business, and the public sector.

3. To consider issues of gender and leadership effectiveness.

4. To compare and contrast paths to leadership positions.

5. To understand the ways in which women's leadership may differ from men's.

6. To reflect on women and leadership in light of contemporary scholarship on women's development.

7. To promote networking.

Class sessions featuring invited guests focused on these topics: Confronting the Internal and External Barriers to Leadership by Women; Leadership Style -- Male and Female Differences?; Women and Social Change; Mentoring and Networking; Women's Ways of Leading; and, Being Effective on Policy Making Boards. The required textbooks were The Female Advantage (Helgesen, 1990), and Women in Educational Administration (Shakeshaft, 1989). In addition to reading the required texts, each participant was expected to complete the following assignments:

A. Prepare a one-page handout and present an oral review of an assigned research article.

B. Develop a career plan.

C. Read an additional book and participate in a three-person panel presentation in which panel members compare and contrast the major concepts of their three different books and consider the implications of those concepts for women leaders. Organizing topics for the panels were: Business Perspectives, Psychology of Women, Women and Self Esteem, Assertiveness, Developing Voice, and Women as Leaders. The pre-selected books related to these panel topics and are listed in Appendix A.

D. Complete a take-home Final Exam by writing an integrated essay on "Women and Leadership" that answers the following four questions:

1. What did you already know about women and leadership before taking this course?

2. What have you learned?

3. In what ways has this course moved you in the direction of developing/claiming your own voice?

4. What issues/topics do you want to explore further?

Profiles of Participants

Demographic information about the course participants, summarized by age group categories in Table 1, comes from their responses to "Women Educational Leaders: Participant Profile," a survey included in Women of Vision, Women of Influence (Astin & Leland, 1991). These profiles were completed at the first class meeting. Of the 18 women, 16 were enrolled in masters programs. Of the remaining two, both were taking the class for personal enrichment. One had just completed her BA, and the other already held an MA degree. Ranging in age from 22 to 45, nine women were in their 20s, six in their 30s, and three in their 40s.

One of the participants was a full-time graduate student. Five of the women were employed as administrators at the community college/university level. Half of the 18 were employed by K-12 school districts, with seven teaching in K-12 school systems, one coordinating student assistance programs at a high school, and one serving as a high school dean. Of the remaining participants, two held administrative positions outside of education at the Private Industry Council and one was a personnel assistant trainee for the county government. In terms of birth order, three were first born and only children while seven others were first born; three were second born; and the remaining five were third or later born. Of the women, 12 were married; three were single (never married); two were divorced, and one women described herself as married, divorced, and remarried. Eight of the women were parents. Three had one child; three had two children; and two had three children. The class was racially diverse, with six African Americans. The remaining 12 women were non-Hispanic whites. Of the women, 17 were United States citizens and one woman was Lebanese.

Table 1

Demographic Information about Seminar Participants

Occupation	Birth Order	Marital Status	Number of Children	Race/ National Origin
Women in Their 20s				
1. Personnel Assistant Trainee County Government	FB/Only	Single	0	AA/US
2. Teacher - Middle School*	3rd or later	Single	0	AA/US
3. Graduate Student*	First Born	Married	0	NHW/Lebanese
4. Teacher - High School*	First Born	Married	0	NHW/US
5. Student Assistance Coordinator - High School*	FB/Only	Married	0	NHW/US
6. Director of Annual Fund University*	Sec/Born	Married	0	NHW/US
7. Youth Program Coordinator Private Industry Council*	First Born	Single	0	NHW/US
8. Teacher - Middle School*	First Born	Divorced	0	NHW/US
9. Assistant Director of Annual Fund - University*	3rd or later	Married	0	NHW/US
Women in Their 30s				
10. Assistant to Director of Continuing Education Community College*	FB/Only	Married	0	AA/US
11. Teacher - High School*	Sec/Born	Married	1	NHW/US
12. Coordinator of Job Training Programs Private Industry Council*	Sex/Born	Divorced	1	AA/US
13. Director of Non-Credit Programs - University*	3rd or later	Married	2	NHW/US
14. Teacher - Elementary*	3rd or later	Married	2	AA/US
15. Assistant to Director of Financial Assistance - University*	First Born	Married	3	NHW/US

Women in Their 40s				
16. Teacher - High School*	First Born	Married	2	NHW/US
17. Dean of Students - High School	3rd or later	Married	1	AA/US
18. Teacher - Elementary*	First Born	M/Div/Remar.	3	NHW/US

Note. * Indicates enrolled in MA program
AA - African American
NHW - Non-Hispanic White
US - United States

One of the questions on the Final Exam was, " What did you already know about women and leadership?" What participants asserted they knew about women and leadership before the class included the following sometimes contradictory statements:

1. That they had not given the subject much thought;
2. That women and men lead differently;
3. That women can be strong and effective leaders;
4. That women should not aspire to top leadership positions;
5. That women do need to adopt male styles to be successful as leaders;
6. That women do not need to adopt male leadership styles to be successful leaders;
7. That women are often asked to do more to prove themselves as leaders;
8. That too few women are in leadership positions;
9. That women are discriminated against in the leadership selection process;
10. That women are not discriminated against in the leadership selection process;
11. That "women's ways of doing" are devalued;
12. That the experience of discrimination or being devalued can lead to self doubt.

Presentation and Discussion of Evaluation Data

The three major objectives of the course were: (1) To encourage development of each woman's "voice"; (2) To enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness; and (3) To raise each woman's professional aspirations. Two types of evaluation data will be presented to show that these objectives were accomplished: Final Exam essay responses and data from the Follow-Up Questionnaire sent to participants six months after the conclusion of the seminar. Finally, to substantiate the over-all effectiveness of the course, data from the Bradley University College of Education and Health Sciences Faculty Evaluation form will be reported. Although this instrument did not focus specifically on evaluating the instructor's three major objectives for the course, participant ratings are further evidence of the over-all effectiveness of the course.

To Encourage Development of Each Woman's Voice

Final Exams

The Final Exam essays are the best evidence that the course accomplished one of the instructor's major objectives, to encourage the development of each woman's voice. One of the exam questions was, "In what ways has this course moved you in the direction of developing/claiming your own voice?" A summary of responses according to age categories will incorporate the women's own words.

Women in Their 20s. Of the nine women in this age category, several commented on the helpfulness of the instructor's self disclosure, and the network of support for interaction and self-disclosure that the class provided. As a group they were intrigued with the concept of leading by voice suggested in the Helgesen book. One said that the "idea that had the most impact on me was the idea that women lead by voice and men lead by vision. I never thought of voice and vision being two separate entities. After contemplating the difference between voice and vision, I decided that it is only natural that women lead by voice because everything in a woman's life is interconnected." Three of these women found the voices of other easier to hear than their own. Two were reassured by the idea that they had "voices in training" and that voice was something that developed over time. One of these two women wrote, "With respect to developing or claiming my voice, I do feel as if I have moved in a positive direction in the last two weeks. I have become more able to understand leadership and administration. I am more direct with comments and questions and more confident about what I am saying or doing. I also feel this new voice will lead me into volunteering for more leadership positions." Another person wrote: "The concept of voice was something I did not have a name for but was working on developing." She also credited class interaction as having moved her in the direction of capturing her own voice, mentioning the importance of having personal concerns validated. Finally, she wrote, "The most outstanding influence has been all the information and articles explaining that women can be extremely effective without taking on the male managerial style."

Three of these nine women commented on the importance of valuing the strengths in women's

leadership styles. One person in particular had past negative experiences with trying to lead from a male model. She wrote: "I believe that I am in the process of further developing and strengthening my voice. I have tried in the past to take the advice of men and implement their style of leadership into my life and this has proven to be unsuccessful for me. If you're not being yourself, it only leaves you physically drained and emotionally distraught. It is important to be yourself and to develop your own individual style or voice to its fullest potential." On this same point, another woman wrote: "I would have to say that the most significant thing I learned from my synthesis of the reading material, presentations, class discussions, and activities is that women's differences and their unique natures are to be embraced and not covered up or disguised. This will allow for more freedom and creativity as we grow into ourselves, developing our VOICE which will increase our potential as human beings to impact the world."

Two women commented on the struggle to balance personal and professional lives. One called the seminar "a wonderful eye-opener." She explained how her voice had vacillated as she had struggled to balance a professional and personal life and stated her determination "to continue my journey to develop and balance my voice in a more assertive and healthy way." Another woman put it this way: "This class allowed me to look at myself as an individual first and then add to that the needs of my husband, children and other activities. My voice today is maybe not different than before taking the class, but it is more noticeable, and stronger. I feel the importance of following it."

Women in Their 30s. The six women in this age category included two who were at opposite ends of the continuum in terms of development of voice. Assertiveness was a topic of particular interest. One forceful 30s woman wrote:

> The articles on assertiveness sparked discussion which led me to discover that I may appear threatening to some individuals based on my style of presentation (direct, confident, assertive, etc.). I never realized this before and I can now think of situations in my past where I could have been less assertive and still have accomplished my objective. Also, I feel that this insight has helped me to affirm my voice or claim it openly and I feel that it

would be fair to say that his course, even in its short duration, has moved me in that direction.

Another learned the value of being more assertive, "This class has taught me that expressing myself assertively in all areas of my life can help others grow as well as myself."

Still another woman speaks of the course as a step in leading her back from a significant loss of voice experienced when she became a single mom. Writing about this experience in some detail, she concluded: "While the details of my experience are unique, the feelings of voicelessness and/or not being heard have plagued women in the workplace since we entered it. Ironically, as I have learned, those very qualities for which we have been 'kept in our places' are the very ones surfacing as our success in leadership grows and our voices are heard. The discovery of voice has been an awakening one for me. I am not certain if I am comfortable with it yet or not, but its emergence has given me a drive I have not felt in a long time." Having read Women's Ways of Knowing for her panel presentation, she continued:

> Like many of the women studied in Women's Ways of Knowing, I distinctly remember my emergence of intuitive voice. It occurred in the middle of the imagery exercise the first Saturday of class. Explaining that experience in pairs was really emotional for me. I could take some psychological guesses as to why, but mostly I feel that for the first time since I became a mom, my work life and future were truly back on track. Everything seemed to fall into place . . . if I do not follow this 'infallible gut,' I will be silencing me and my dream to be a high school or elementary principal. My 'voice' does have to relax, soften, and listen more before I will be happy with it. What will continue to help me in developing my voice will be what I have learned, both theoretical and practical, in this class . . . Mentoring was encouraged in every learning experience. You modeled it for us, our speakers were grateful for having had mentors, and each of the three books I read connected mentoring to career advancement and development of voice . . . The true test of my commitment to my emerging "voice" will be the future. I sincerely credit experiences I have had in this class, your genuine care for each of us, the comradry among

the women, the honesty from each speaker, as a turning point in my life.

Several in this age group also mentioned the power of the exercise in which they were asked to imagine an ideal working day five years in the future. For example, one wrote "Visualizing where I would be in my life in five years made a significant impact on my self-confidence by allowing me to dream uninhibited." One woman believed the class to have been "encircled by a mystical or perhaps spiritual power which brought about understanding, unity, and healing." During the class she came to understand "why I was experiencing self-doubt and beginning to repress my thoughts and ideas within the corporate structure. This understanding has created an awareness that has allowed me to reclaim my power within." Another experienced a similar self- affirmation. "Discovering and appreciating my voice as to what it has to offer helps to dispel distorted views and build self-esteem within myself. I came to realize that everyone's voice is authentic." Several in this age group also had been struggling with the balancing of personal and professional lives mentioned by women in their 20s. "I've struggled with the conflict between career and motherhood, but I have resolved it. During our class, I discovered that resolving this conflict meant taking claim to my voice."

The words of the final participant in this age category serve as a summary of the 30s themes.

> As I reflect upon the past three weeks, I am struck by the ways that each woman's personality and experiences added a certain sparkle to the class. It was a collection of different people bonded by a common thread that created a dynamic learning environment. This atmosphere encouraged me to begin to listen for my 'voice.' What I began to hear was a recurring theme which can be characterized as a growing sense of freedom -- freedom to be a competent woman; freedom from feeling inadequate because I work and think differently than the men in my life; freedom to become more than I believed I could be. Most important, I feel that I am striving to gain a sense of confidence in my freedom to express who I am in the context of work and my personal life. This seminar has helped move me toward discovering and developing my 'voice'.

Women in Their 40s. Only three of the women in the class were in their 40s. For each of

them the course was a significant learning experience in terms of voice and marked a turning point. One woman was intimidated, at first, by the younger women, saying "the women in this class were very out of the ordinary." She wrote, "As we began to listen to each other somehow everyone else seemed to have more to say and a better reason for saying it than anything I could think of, so as a general rule, I just listened." During the course, she realized that her voice was being held back by her belief that she was "just a teacher" and she decided that "it was time to discard the 'just a teacher' idea. I had no idea how much of myself I had stifled with this notion and I found it very difficult to cope with." She wrote that in the class she found the "beginning of a strong personal voice."

The second woman, already in an administrative position, also experienced the seminar as a turning point. "This seminar has directed me into making a decision that I have been struggling to make. I have felt the need to make a change in my job for the last two years. I have decided upon the direction in which I will now pursue a change." Six months later she moved from her position as a high school dean to an assistant principalship in an elementary school. She also has decided to pursue a doctoral degree. She wrote:

> Learning that it is acceptable to really be female and to have your own style helped me to decide to pursue my doctorate degree in administration. I think that learning to be myself, learning to accept myself in terms of knowing my strengths and weaknesses, learning to express my values in the way that I do things have helped me to find my voice. Needless to say that at this point in my life, my voice is very weak and soft. But, it is so gratifying to know that because I now know the direction of my path, my voice will become stronger and visible as I continue to grow.

The final participant, who reported herself previously unaware of discrimination against women, made a commitment to became an advocate for other women. "Participation in the 'Women and Leadership' seminar has enabled me to understand the importance of developing and utilizing my own voice. I have come to realize that it is only as each woman develops and utilizes her own voice that all women will be able to achieve their potential. I visualize this as an upwardly

spiraling process. As women develop and express their voices more fully their collective voice impacts society allowing them to rise higher on the spiral." She continued:

> By owning my previous experiences and integrating them with new knowledge I have been able to strengthen my voice. I feel this class has helped me develop my hearing as well as my voice. I am more sensitive to situations wherein women are treated in a discriminatory or condescending manner. While I still contend I don't have a personal quarrel with the male establishment I realize it may well be because I haven't challenged it. I can see myself speaking out on behalf of those who have chosen to use their time and talents in more traditionally male dominated career fields. I am willing to use my voice to work towards advancing women's rights to work, learn, be fairly compensated and promoted in the career fields of their choice.

Follow-Up Questionnaire

The Follow-Up Questionnaire sent to the women six months after the course ended contained this question: "To what extent has your 'voice' changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?" Categorical responses and comments will be reported. Totally Different was the response of 2 (11%). A total of 8 (45%) chose Greatly Different, while 6 (33%) indicated Somewhat Different. The final 2 (11%) marked Not at all Different. Of the 16 (89%) who had experienced some change or difference, answers to the follow-up question , "If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?" were as follows: 7 (44%) attributed the difference to ELH 681, 8 (50%) marked ELH 681 and Other Factors, and 1 (6%) had been influenced by Other Factors. In summary, 15 of the 16 (94%) who reported a change or a difference included ELH 681 as all or part of the cause. These results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses in Percentages to Question #7 about Change or Difference in "Voice" and to Follow-Up Question about Cause

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)					
Question #7	Not Apply	Totally Different	Greatly Different	Somewhat Different	Not at All Different	No Response
"To what extent has your voice changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?"	0	11	45	33	11	0

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 16)			
Follow-Up Question	ELH 681	ELH 681 and Other Factors	Other Factors	No Response
"If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?"	44	50	6	0

Written comments provided elaboration of what the responses meant. Words used by those who experienced a difference reported their voices being more "direct", "stronger", more "confident", "assertive", and "authentic." Several mentioned taking more initiative and speaking out more. One mentioned having "more open passion." Several referred to discovery of voice as having taken place in the class. Two spoke of inner spiritual growth and its expression in their voices. One commented on "encouraging other women to listen for and express their own voices." One whose voice was not different said, "Before this class I didn't realize I had a voice. I am still searching and collecting from other voices to develop a voice of my own."

To Enhance Each Woman's Leadership Effectiveness

The second major course objective was to enhance each woman's leadership effectiveness. Evidence that this objective was accomplished comes from participant answers to two questions included on the Follow-Up Questionnaire. Categorical responses as well as comments will be reported for each question. The questions asked about two factors, self-confidence and skills, that

contribute to leadership effectiveness.

The first question was: "To what extent has your level of self-confidence changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?" Totally Different was the response of 4 (22%); 9 (50%) indicated Greatly Different; and 5 (28%) responded Somewhat Different. No one chose Not at all Different or Not Apply. In response to a follow-up question, "If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?" 4 (22%) responded ELH 681 and the other 14 (78%) indicated ELH 681 and Other Factors. No one chose the option Other Factors. In summary, all 18 (100%) of the class members reported that participation in ELH 681 had affected their level of self-confidence to some degree and each included ELH 681 as all or part of the cause. These results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses in Percentages to Question #11 about Change or Difference in Level of Self-Confidence and to Follow-Up Question about Cause

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)					
Question #11	Not Apply	Totally Different	Greatly Different	Somewhat Different	Not at All Different	No Response
"To what extent has your level of self-confidence changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?"	0	22	50	28	0	0

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)			
Follow-Up Question	ELH 681	ELH 681 and Other Factors	Other Factors	No Response
"If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?"	22	78	0	0

Comments provided explanations for their ratings. Among the comments by the nine women in their 20s were descriptions of speaking up more in meetings, being a more confident teacher, a growth in self-esteem, liking myself, and not feeling alone. Their responses, with one exception,

were in the Totally or Greatly Different categories. The person who chose Somewhat Different explained that she had always been a fairly confident person, but that "this class gave me even more confidence and acceptance of me." Responses of the women in their 30s clustered mostly in the Somewhat Different category, with only two choosing other categories. One of the women in her 40s called her increase in self confidence "dramatic," saying she believed she "might actually, eventually fit into the goal I've set." Another wrote, "I've decided that if others can do anything I can too." The third wrote that the class had been "empowering," and that "It helped me feel good about myself and want to share that feeling by lifting others up too."

The second question was: " To what extent have your leadership skills changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?" Totally Different was the response of 3 (17%); 10 (56%) chose Greatly Different; and 4 (22%) indicated their skills were Somewhat Different. No one marked Not at all Different or Not Apply, however one person (5%) did not respond to this question. Only 16 of the 17 who answered the question responded to the follow-up question, with 5 (29%) indicating the cause of the difference to be ELH 681; 10 (59%) indicating the cause to be ELH 681 and Other Factors; and 1 (6%) indicating the cause to be Other Factors. In summary, of the 17 (94%) reporting their leadership skills to be changed or different, 16 (94%) indicated that ELH 681 had been all or part of the cause. These results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses in Percentages to Question #5 about Change or Difference in Leadership Skills and to Follow-Up Question about Cause

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)					
Question #5	Not Apply	Totally Different	Greatly Different	Somewhat Different	Not at All Different	No Response
"To what extent have your leadership skills changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?"	0	17	56	22	0	5

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 17)			
Follow-Up Question	ELH 681	ELH 681 and Other Factors	Other Factors	No Response
"If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?"	29	59	6	6

Written comments provided explanation. The women in their 20s who had experienced the most change mentioned sharpened listening skills, conflict resolution strategies, more confidence in their leadership skills, and greater willingness to be part of a team. The one woman in her 20s who said her skills were only somewhat changed mentioned that she was more confident and that she was "fine tuning skills and shaping the important ones." One woman in her 30s found herself "taking more risks." Another mentioned trying to look at situations "from more than one perspective." Still another woman in her 30s wrote of increased confidence in her skills and concentration on sharpening those skills. She was using the women from The Female Advantage (Helgesen, 1990) as role models and consciously trying some of their approaches, especially their communications' strategies. She also reported more self-acceptance of her female approach to business. Two mentioned being more comfortable in leadership roles. Of the women in their 40s, one mentioned being more willing to assume a leadership role and another described taking on more responsibilities in her new position.

To Raise Each Woman's Professional Aspirations

Comments made to the instructor both verbally and in the Final Exams suggested that the ideal working day imagery activity, career plan activity, and hearing the guest speakers had raised both the educational and professional aspirations of many of the women. Answers to two questions on the Follow-Up Questionnaire indicated that this effect had continued.

The first question was: (1) "To what extent have your educational aspirations changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?" Totally Different was the response of 2 (11%); 4 (22%) indicated Greatly Different; 8 (45%) marked Somewhat Different; and 2 (11%) responded Not at all Different. The question was not answered by 2 (11%) persons. In response to the follow-up question, "If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?" 5 (36%) answered ELH 681 and 9 (64%) responded ELH 681 and Other Factors. No one chose Other Factors. Of the total class, 14 (78%) reported that their educational aspirations had changed or were different to some degree. In summary, for all 14 (100%) women who reported that their educational aspirations had changed or were different, ELH 681 was included as all or part of the cause. Table 5 summarizes these results.

Table 5

Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses in Percentages to Question #3 about Change or Difference in Educational Aspirations and to Follow-Up Question about Cause

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)					
Question #3	Not Apply	Totally Different	Greatly Different	Somewhat Different	Not at All Different	No Response
"To what extent have your educational aspirations changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?"	0	11	22	45	11	11

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 14)			
Follow-Up Question	ELH 681	ELH 681 and Other Factors	Other Factors	No Response
"If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?"	36	64	0	0

Again, participants' comments provided elaboration. Of the women who added comments to the questionnaire, eight wrote that they are now committed to or seriously considering a doctorate. Of those in their 20s, three are now considering or committed to graduate work beyond the masters and one is definitely now committed to finishing her masters degree. Three are considering pursuing a doctorate. Another woman in that age category was already planning on a doctorate, but mentioned being "more confident" that she could accomplish that goal. Five of the women in their 30s are considering or committed to further graduate work beyond a masters with three committed to or considering a doctorate. Even one woman in her 40's wrote, "For the first time I have seriously considered pursuing a doctoral degree. I am still trying this on in my mind." Several wrote of being inspired by the stories of the guest speakers who had juggled family responsibilities with educational and professional accomplishments.

Educational aspirations and professional aspirations are related, with the former increasing a person's professional options. A second question directly focused on professional aspirations:

"To what extent have your professional aspirations changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?" Totally Different was the response of 2 (11%); 10 (55%) chose Greatly Different; 3 (17%) responded with Somewhat Different; and 3 (17%) indicated they were Not at all Different. In response to the follow-up question, of the 15 (83%) who reported a change or difference 5 (33%) indicated that the cause was ELH 681 and 10 (67%) answered ELH 681 and Other Factors. In summary, all of the 15 women who reported a change or difference included ELH 681 as all or part of the cause. These results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses in Percentages to Question #2 about Change or Difference in Professional Aspirations and to Follow-Up Question about Cause

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 18)					
Question #2	Not Apply	Totally Different	Greatly Different	Somewhat Different	Not at All Different	No Response
"To what extent have your professional aspirations changed or been different since your participation in ELH 681?"	0	11	55	17	17	0

	Responses Expressed as Percentages (N = 15)			
Follow-Up Question	ELH 681	ELH 681 and Other Factors	Other Factors	No Response
"If change or difference exists, what has been the cause?"	33	67	0	0

Comments clarified these changed or different aspirations. In the 20s category, one woman now says, "My aspirations are endless. I see that gender really does not have to be a handicap or disability." Several mentioned the link between greater confidence and increased aspirations, with four writing that their ideas were clearer and that they had a clearer view of alternative paths. The women in their 30s were looking at new options. One was planning to develop her own business.

Several were either more aware of or more comfortable with their long term plans and goals. Two of the women in their 40s now want to be principals.

Over-All Effectiveness of the "Women and Leadership" Seminar

Two types of evaluation data suggest that the seminar was a highly positive educational experience that accomplished the instructor's major objectives and more. Data from the Bradley University Faculty Evaluation and analysis of responses to the Final Exam will be presented.

Faculty Evaluation

The required Bradley University Faculty Evaluation asks class participants to respond to 10 questions with ratings of from 1 to 5. All 18 participants responded to each of the 10 questions with either a 4 (Agree) or a 5 (Strongly Agree). Table 7 presents the responses and the mean for each question. The composite mean for all 10 questions was 4.92, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the course and the instructor. Particularly relevant items are that the course was a "valuable learning experience," that "class time was well spent," and that the faculty member "stimulated interest in the subject matter."

Table 7

Frequency of Responses and Means of "Women and Leadership" Seminar Participants to Bradley University Faculty Evaluation Form Questions

Question	* Response Options 1	2	3	4	5	M
1. The course/practicum corresponds closely to clearly stated objectives.					18	5.00
2. Students were informed of grading procedures in the syllabus, and these procedures were followed.				1	17	4.94
3. This course/practicum provided a valuable learning experience.					18	5.00
4. The faculty member effectively conveyed knowledge of the subject.				2	16	4.89
5. The faculty members presentations/directions were clear and well organized.				6	11	4.39
6. The faculty member displayed interest and enthusiasm in the topic/presentation.					18	5.00
7. Class/practicum time was well spent.					18	5.00
8. The faculty member was responsive to students.				1	17	4.94
9. The faculty member stimulated interest in the subject matter.					18	5.00
10. Exams are representative of assignments, materials, and lectures.					18	5.00
					Composite Mean	4.92

Note. * 1, Strongly Disagree; 2, Disagree; 3, Neutral; 4, Agree; 5, Strongly Agree

Final Exams

In answering the Final Exam question "What have you learned?" participants were asked to "Please consider what have been the most significant "learnings" for you in at least the following categories: what you read -- textbooks, panel book, and article; what you heard -- from the instructor, speakers, and class members; what you did -- class activities and assignments." Exam responses to this question were wide-ranging and varied, with every person discussing more than one "learning." Four categories contain a majority of the responses: (1) increased self-understanding; (2) increased historical or factual information; (3) increased understanding of male/female leadership differences and/or increased valuing of female leadership characteristics; and, (4) practical advice in the "recurring themes" of the guest speakers. Elaboration of these categories provides additional evidence of the over-all effectiveness of the course.

Increased self-understanding was directly mentioned or implied in 11 (61%) of the 18 papers. Responses included within that category were understanding one's own leadership style and how that affects others, self-identity, the sources of self doubt, one's own leadership potential, and the value of one's experience. The value of learning factual information about the role of women in history and education, and particularly in educational administration, was mentioned in 8 (44%) of the 18 papers. Participants mentioned heightened understanding of discrimination against women as a result of the factual historical information. Differences between male and female leadership styles was listed in 9 (50%) of the 18 papers. For some this learning was simply increased awareness of the differences. Four women specified new understanding that leadership style characteristics associated with women were of value and could contribute to leadership effectiveness. Finally, participants mentioned the value of practical advice, citing in particular several recurring themes in the presentations of the guest speakers. Four of the women commented on their new understanding, as a result of the guest speakers, of the value of volunteerism as a way to develop leadership abilities. In reflecting on the career plan activity, six women commented on hearing the speakers say that their careers had not actually "followed" plans, but more often jobs just happened to materialize. Other recurring themes were the

importance of having a sense of humor, of networking, and of mentoring. Finally, numerous aphorisms from guest speakers' remarks were quoted, including the following:

1. Pick your battles;
2. A promotion to a job you already know how to do is not a promotion;
3. Nothing significant happens without the involvement of women;
4. Do your homework;
5. Good people always have choices;
6. *Done* is better than perfect.

This brief summary leaves out many of the specific learnings important to particular individuals. Representative sentences from Final Exam essays express that the seminar was a powerful learning experience: "I enrolled in the class with 'blinders' on and by the time I left, I was no longer wearing blinders, and the word had been erased from my vocabulary"; "I have learned so much in this class that it is impossible for me to comment on everything"; "I learned more than I can express from this class"; "A group of women has a certain sense about it that fosters stretching yourself to the limits"; "I really learned a lot about who I want to be 'when I grow up,' so to speak"; "I am certain we can all say we are a little smarter, more self-actualized, and confident as a result of this seminar"; "The myth that women aren't qualified, that they are inferior and cannot function at the executive level, was dispelled in my mind"; " I have been deeply moved by what I have learned and experienced within this seminar . . . It helped me to come to grips with the realities of my own experiences as a woman in leadership positions"; "Much of what I learned in this class, I already knew in my heart. The class helped me to accept and believe in my abilities"; "I have also learned that times are changing and that women are not alone in recognizing that women have unique personality traits that make them good leaders"; "This course marks the beginning of a new phase of my life."

Summary

Quantitative and qualitative data from the Final Exams and the Follow-Up Questionnaires, organized by the three major course objectives, have been presented in detail. Table 8 summarizes

the Follow-Up Questionnaire Data by course objective for each of the five questions considered.

Table 8

Summary of Follow-Up Questionnaire Responses to Questions about Change or Difference Since Participation in ELH 681

Course Objective and Related Question/s	Responses Expressed as Total Percentages		
	* Change or Difference	Change or Difference caused all or partly by ELH 681	
	(N = 18)	N	Percentage
I. TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF EACH WOMAN'S "VOICE."			
#7. To what extent has your voice changed or been different?	89	16	94
II. TO ENHANCE EACH WOMAN'S LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS.			
#11. To what extent has your level of self confidence changed or been different?	100	18	100
#5. To what extent have your leadership skills changed or been different?	95	17	88
III. TO RAISE EACH WOMAN'S PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS.			
#3. To what extent have your educational aspirations changed or been different?	78	14	100
#2. To what extent have your professional aspirations changed or been different?	83	15	100

* Combines categories Totally Different, Greatly Different, and Somewhat Different

In terms of the major course objectives, and considering only the Follow-Up Questionnaire results, the course seems to have been most successful in enhancing each woman's leadership effectiveness through increasing the self-confidence of 100% of the class participants, and

enhancing the leadership skills of 95% of the class participants. Secondly, the course encouraged the development of each woman's "voice," with 89% reporting a change or difference. And finally, the course raised the educational aspirations of 78% of the class participants and raised the professional aspirations of 83%.

Conclusion

The three types of evaluation data presented suggest that the course was highly effective in accomplishing the instructor's three major objectives. Final Exam essays and written comments on the Follow-Up Questionnaires suggest that the effectiveness of the course was related to its structure or design. Participants responded to the interactive growth-promoting culture of a "connected class," where "no one apologizes for uncertainty" (Belenky, et al, 1986, p. 221). The atmosphere promoted personal sharing of struggles as well as successes. The women responded to the concept of "voice," and the idea that women lead through voice. Class discussions and activities, such as the research and panel presentations, provided opportunities for each woman to explore this concept and to develop a clearer and more confident voice. The development of voice played an important role in increasing the self-confidence of each participant. Contributing also to increased self-confidence was the idea suggested in the required readings, and confirmed by the guest speakers, that women may lead differently from men and still be effective. Finally, class participants were encouraged by each other and through the examples of the guest speakers to consider higher aspirations. Outcome of the experience well illustrate that "Through mutual stretching and sharing the group achieves a vision richer than any individual could achieve alone" (Belenky, et al., 1986, p. 119).

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Appendix A

Closing Panel Assignment, Topics, and Required Books

Students worked in three-person groups. Each group developed a panel presentation, of approximately 45 minutes, that was presented on the closing Saturday. The purpose of the panel presentation was to discuss and illuminate the topic by: (1) Comparing and contrasting the major ideas presented in the books; and (2) Considering the implications of those ideas for women leaders. Following is a list of the topics and the books read for each.

1. Business Perspectives

   A. The Managerial Woman
   Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim, Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977

   B. Games Mother Never Taught You
   Betty Lehan Harrigan, Warner Books, 1977

   C. Breaking the Glass Ceiling
   Ann Morrison, et al., Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1987

2. Psychology of Women

   A. Toward a New Psychology of Women
   Jean Baker Miller, Beacon Press, 1976

   B. Women's Reality
   Anne Wilson Schaef, Winston Press, 1981

   C. In a Different Voice
   Carol Gilligan, Harvard University Press, 1982

3. Women and Self Esteem

   A. Overcoming the Fear of Success
   Martha Friedman, Warner Books, 1980

   B. Women & Self-Esteem
   Linda Sanford and Mary Ellen Donovan, Penguin Books, 1984

   C. Perfect Women
   Colette Dowling, Summit Books, 1988

4. Assertiveness

   A. The Assertive Woman: A New Look
   Stanlee Phelps and Nancy Austin, Impact, 1987

   B. Self-Assertion for Women
   Pamela E. Butler, HarperSanFrancisco, 1981

   C. Femininity
   Susan Brownmiller, Fawcett Columbine, 1984

5. Developing Voice

   A. Words and Women
   Casey Miller and Kate Swift, HarperColliins Publisher, 1976, Updated 1991

   B. Women's Ways of Knowing
   Mary Field Belenky, et al., Basic Books, Inc., 1986

   C. You Just Don't Understand
   Deborah Tannen, Ballantine, 1990

6. Women as Leaders

   A. Women Managers: "Travellers in a Male World"
   Judi Marshall, John Wiley & Sons, 1984

   B. Feminine Leadership or How to Succeed in Business Without Being One of the Boys
   Marilyn Loden, Times Books, 1985

   C. Smart Girls, Gifted Women
   Barbara A. Kerr, Ohio Psychology Publishing Co., 1985.